

the slender third volume, is written with a pen of gall, and damages the writer more than the young ruler who was the object of his attack, and who lived long enough to learn what Bismarck thought of him. Very different is the portrait of William I, "the real type of the Prussian officer," painted with affectionate gratitude and essentially true to life. His brother, Frederick William IV, lost himself in medieval fancies, and his wife, a Weimar princess, is described as preferring Frenchmen and Englishmen to Germans. The Emperor Frederick is treated with respect. The Iron Chancellor was a good hater. Every statement of fact has to be verified, every judgment-of men and events to be checked. In cases of notorious personal antagonism like Count Arnim, and of a competing ideology like the Empress Frederick, we are on our guard, but the author occasionally misrepresents himself. For instance, now that we have his despatches of the middle 'sixties, we discover that he was much less resolved on war with Austria than his memoirs assert. Looking back on his achievement, it presented itself as the faultless and unhesitating execution of a grandiose architectural design. The real story is more empirical, for diplomacy, like campaigning, cannot foresee every twist of the road. Bismarck was resolved to found the German Empire, but he had to feel his way and some of the steps which led to the goal only became clear as he advanced. The account of the Hohenzollern candidature in Spain, which led straight to the war of 1870, is thoroughly misleading, for we learn from the diaries of King Carol of Roumania and other sources that he planned the whole thing and knew perfectly well that he was playing with fire. In home affairs, about which he has less to say, he is at times equally disingenuous, for instance, in his account of the Kulturkampf, which he presents

as above all a
defence of the state against Polish influences,
and in regard to
which he tendenciously exaggerates the influence
of Falk, his
Kultus-Minister. None of his colleagues except
Roos counted
in the formation and execution of policies.

Now that the original authorities for the
Bismarckian era
are mostly in print, the value of the *Gedanken*
und *Erinnerungen*
is to be found less in the narrative of events,
though his story
of the three wars can never die, than in the
revelation of the
authors personality and ideas. The book is
strongest in foreign
affairs, for Bismarck was before everything else a
diplomatist.

Germany, he declares again and again, must
keep in with
Russia, for German policy could not rest solely on
the Austrian